FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Assessor's Number	USGS Quad	Area(s)	Form Number
4-250A	ORLEANS		EAS.86

Town/City: Town of Eastham

Place: *(neighborhood or village)*:
North Easton

Address: 1285 Massasoit Road

Historic Name: Parker & Rachel Brown House

Uses: Present: single-family residence

Original: single-family residence

Date of Construction: 1807-11

Source: deeds, censuses, vital records

Style/Form: Federal/Cape Cod

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:
Foundation: brick

Wall/Trim: wood shingle/wood

Roof: asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
Small barn, indeterminate date

Major Alterations *(with dates)*:
sunroom wing added, mid-20th c.

Condition: good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

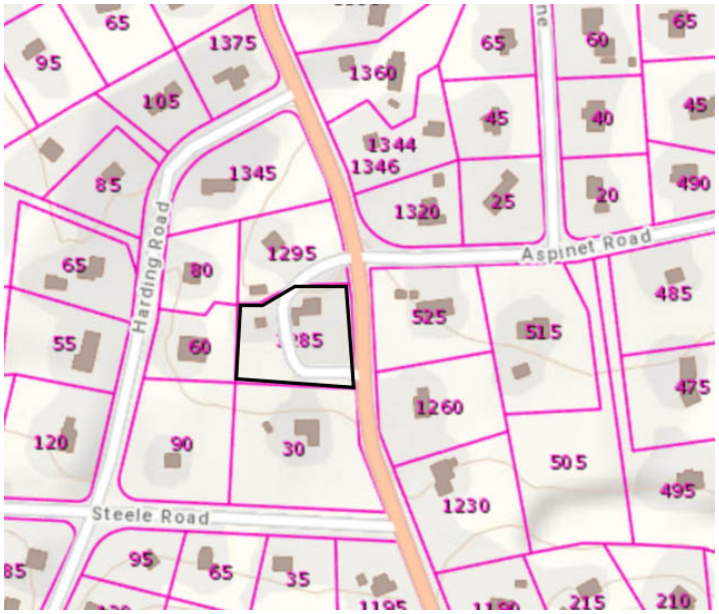
Acreage: 0.75

Setting: The property is situated on a historic highway leading north from North Eastham and is now part of a pattern of late-20th-century residential subdivisions.

Photograph

View from NE.

Locus Map (north at top)



Source: Mass GIS Oliver Parcel Viewer

Recorded by: Kathryn Grover & Neil Larson
Larson Fisher Associates

Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date: June 2020

☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Parker & Rachel Brown House, built ca. 1807, is a one-story wood frame single dwelling with a three-quarters Cale Cod plan, center chimney and four-bay front façade. It has a gable roof, with a barely-perceptible bow, by which it was described in the 1995 MHC B Form. The off-center entrance opens in a lobby and stair in front of the chimney. It is flanked by front rooms of different sizes, the larger one having two windows and the smaller chamber with only one. Both had fireplaces in the chimney as well as a kitchen or keeping room in the rear of the plan. The doorway is flanked by flat pilasters rising above a transom to the eaves. Pronounced frieze and cornerboards frame the façade, windows are distinguished by simple crown moldings. The north gable end also contains an entrance with a transom and plain trim centered between two windows. This doorway provides access to the rear rooms in the plan. Two windows are paired closely together in the attic. Fenestration on the south gable end, which had matched that on the north except without the door, was altered to add a double window in the rear of the first story and add a small window under the eaves at the rear of the upper story. What likely is an original, one-story, cross-gable kitchen wing is appended to the west side of the house. Perpendicular to the south wall of the wing is a one-story ell containing a large sunroom that was added in the 20th century.

The house is situated on a three-quarter-acre lot in a small clearing within a wooded landscape. A small one-story wood frame barn of indeterminate date is located on the west side of the parcel. It has a front-gable façade with a central vehicle bay with swing doors. A shed-roof extension with a standard entrance was added later to the north side. The remains of a collapsed barn is located nearby to the north on the adjoining property subdivide in 1985.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

In late January 1807, Wellfleet couples Jonathan and Eunice Higgins and Jonathan and Eunice Stone sold Parker Brown of Eastham a wooded tract in Eastham described as being west of the cartway to Silver Spring, on Eastham's northwest shore.[1] Parker Brown (1780-1856) was the son of David Brown (1752-1836) and possibly Tabitha Gill. He is not listed as a householder in the 1810 census, but in 1811 he married Rachel Atwood (1789-1861), the daughter of Benjamin Atwood of Wellfleet and Elizabeth Doane of Eastham. The Eastham 1820 census shows him as a head of household with his wife, three sons younger than ten (Parker, born 1815, Charles, born 1817, and Ezekiel, born 1820), and two daughters younger than ten (Hannah, born 1812, and Betsey, born 1813). By 1830 there were ten in the household: Avery, Harriet, and Benjamin had been born between 1821 and 1825; the youngest child, Rachel, was born in 1830.

By 1850 Parker Brown was described in the census as a 71-year-old farmer with $449 in real property. By then at least seven of the couple's nine children had married and left the household, and Parker and Rachel Brown had taken in a five-year-old Metilda Brown on Boston. His farm was about forty acres and valued at $300. Parker Brown's son Ezekiel and his family were enumerated in the household before his, and son Charles and his family were listed in the household after.

Parker Brown died in 1856, and his will left his entire estate to his widow except for five dollars bequeathed to son Charles's daughter Zilpha, born in 1847. The 1858 Eastham map labels the house on this site "Mrs P. Brown," and the widowed Rachel Brown was listed alone in the household in 1860 with $600 in real property. She died in Cambridge, possibly at the home of her youngest daughter Rachel Brown Orne (1830-1905), in 1861.

In 1862 Parker Brown Jr., as attorney for his parents' estates, sold fifteen acres with the buildings to his older sister Hannah Brown Higgins, who had married Warren Higgins (1810-62) in 1834; they had been enumerated next to her mother in the 1860 census with their son Warren R. Higgins (1852-92).[2] Hannah Higgins is not listed in Eastham in 1870, and by 1880 she was

[1] Jonathan and Eunice Higgins, Wellfleet, Jonathan and Eunice Stone, Wellfleet, to Parker Brown, Eastham, 28 January 1807, BCD 999041:391.

[2] Parker Brown by power of attorney from heirs estates Parker Brown and Rachel Brown to Hannah Higgins, 20 December 1862, BCD 93:387. In 1859 Rachel Atwood Brown sold twenty-two acres of her late husband's estate to Warren Higgins; see BCD 74:1. In October 1838, four years after his marriage, Curtis Hopkins (who had married the Browns' daughter Betsey in 1833) sold his brother-in-law Warren Higgins the

Continuation sheet 1

alone in her North Eastham household as well as in Cambridge with her son Warren, a cracker dealer. In 1888 she spent most of the year in her North Eastham home but spent the winter with her son in Cambridge. She died in Cambridge in July 1893.

In June 1890 Hannah Higgins and her son Warren deeded their interest in the Parker Brown homestead to Flora A. Hardwick of Quincy.[3] She was the wife of grocer Edward Hardwick, and the couple appears to have occupied the house if only briefly; the *Hyannis Patriot* of 7 November 1894 reported that "Mr and Mrs Edward Hardwick and son George have moved to Quincy." Hardwick failed to pay two years' worth of taxes to the town of Eastham, and in April 1897 the town sold the property to William B. Steele at auction for $45.[4] Steele owned 1285 Massasoit Road until 1923.

Born in East Harwich, William Bradford Steele (1855-1951) was the son of master mariner William N. Steele of Boston and Deborah S. Crowell of Harwich; his younger brother James Bradley Steele lived for many years in South Eastham at 220 Bridge Road (EAS.56), and his older brother Norton also lived briefly in that section of town, at 50 Dyer Prince Road (Eas.183). As a boy William B. Steele had gone to sea with his father, and he was listed as a fifteen-year-old mariner in the 1870 Harwich census. But he left the sea at age twenty and became a barber in Lynn for two decades before he returned to the Cape to set up a barber shop in Orleans. In 1898 he married (his third marriage) Blanche Eliza Turner, the daughter of Laban W. and Mary Lincoln Turner, who lived at 845 Massasoit Road (EAS.84) in North Eastham, and he and his wife are listed in the 1900 census in this neighborhood with their son William B., born in 1899, and her son Fred Prescott Turner, born in 1895; another son, Charles Malcolm, was born in 1905. William B. Steele was identified as a farmer in the 1900 and 1910 censuses, but by 1920 he was working in the fishery. By 1923 he had moved to a house on Aspinet Road, where he lived with his wife, son, and grandsons at least through 1940; when he died in 1951 he was ninety-six and celebrated as the town's oldest resident.[5]

Steele sold the farmstead at 1285 Massasoit Road to Harry E. Hopkins in early December 1923.[6] Born in Dennis in 1898, Harry Elmer Hopkins was the son of surfman Nehemiah P. Hopkins and Eastham native Geneva Eldredge. In 1917 he was a student at Massachusetts Nautical School and served on two training ships, the Ranger and the Nantucket, and by 1920 he was a third mate in the merchant marine. In 1923 he married Grace E. Rich, the daughter of Albion F. Rich of Eastham, and the couple had three children—Barbara L., Wendell R., and Harry E. Jr.—between 1925 and 1929. Cape newspapers frequently reported Hopkins's brief stays at home between voyages. In 1927 he was third mate on the oil tanker Shreveport, which that year ran from San Pedro, California, to Japan, and he was home with his family for three months in the summer of 1928 before he returned to the Shreveport, then in Philadelphia, He was then second mate, and he and four other crew died in September 1928 when the Shreveport exploded off the North Carolina coast. In October his widow took her children to live in her father's home on Nauset Road and rented the 1285 Massasoit Road house to her brother-in-law, fisherman Wilton Hopkins, and his family.[7] When she and her children returned to Massasoit Road is not exactly known, but they were certainly there by the time the 1940 census was compiled, and Grace Hopkins's elderly father was also part of the household.

In January 1956 Grace Hopkins subdivided the Massasoit Road property, and in 1959 she and her adult children sold the house, outbuildings, and roughly 2.25 acres to James L. Fulton Jr. and his wife Carolyn of Wallingford, Pennsylvania.[8] Five years later the Fultons sold the property to Katherine K. Mace of Redding Ridge, Connecticut, who further divided the property in 1969. She sold it to Donald W. Delaney in 1985, who sold it the next year to John E. Bebout II and his wife Madeleine of Bay Head, New

east half of a house, porch, and shop with kitchen fireplace and oven privileges and a "piece of locust yard" for $200; this house was probably next to that of the girls' parents on Massasoit Road; see BCD 49:512.

[3] Hannah Higgins to Flora A. Hardwick, Quincy, 7 June 1890, BCD 191:296; Warren R. Higgins and Albert M. and Clara M. Small, Cambridge, to Flora A. Hardwick, Quincy, 7 June 1890, BCD 191:297. Clara M. Small was born Clara M. Knowles in Eastham in 1860, and in 1865 she and her parents Benjamin and Betsey C. Knowles lived in Hannah Higgins's household; she and Warren Higgins are described in the deed as the only heirs of Warren Higgins.

[4] George T. Dill, Collector of Taxes Town of Eastham, to William B. Steele, 20 April 1897, BCD 228:369:

[5] Blanche Turner Steele died in 1937. See "Deaths," Yarmouth Register, 2 July 1937, 8, and "William B. Steele," *Boston Globe*, 5 December 1951, 27. Fred P. Turner is sometimes listed as Fred P. Steele; his marriage record leaves his father's name blank.

[6] William B. Steele to Harry E. Hopkins, 3 December 1923, BCD 380:488.

[7] "Boston Man among Dead in Explosion At Sea," *Boston Globe*, 13 September 1928, 8; *Boston Herald*, 13 September 1928, 3. On Hopkins's work and visits home see "North Eastham," *Hyannis Patriot*, 16 April 1917; 3 February 1927, 7;7 June 1928, 8; and 13 September 1928, 10; and "Eastham," *Yarmouth Register*, 31 December 1927, 6. On Grace Hopkins see "North Eastham," *Hyannis Patriot*, 4 October 1928, 8

[8] Grace E. Hopkins, Eastham; Barbara L. Simon kfa Barbara Louise Hopkins, Albuquerque NM; Wendell R. Hopkins, Ballard Vale; Harry E. Hopkins, Yoeka CA, to James L. Fulton Jr. and Carolyn W. Fulton, Wallingford PA, 15 October 1959, BCD 1065:535.

Continuation sheet 2

Jersey. They divorced by 2001 but continued to own the property until 2005, when John Bebout transferred his interest in 1285 Massasoit to his former wife, Madeleine Vick Anderson. She was the owner of record in 2020.[9]

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Barnstable County Registry of Deeds. Deeds, Land Court Records, and Subdivision Maps.
Barnstable Patriot Archives. Sturgis Library Digital Newspaper Archive, https://digital.olivesoftware.com/Olive/APA/Sturgis/#panel=home.
Deyo, Simeon L., ed. *History of Barnstable County, Massachusetts, 1620-1890*. New York: H. W. Blake, 1890.
Dunham's 1929 Eastham (Mass.) Street Directory.
Town of Eastham Tax Commitment Books. 1902-57.
Lowe, Alice Albert. *Nauset on Cape Cod: A History of Eastham*. Falmouth, MA: Eastham Historical Society, 1968.
Massachusetts Historical Commission. "Reconnaissance Survey Report: Eastham." Typescript, Massachusetts Historical Commission, Boston, 1984.
Resident and Business Directory of Cape Cod, Massachusetts, 1901. South Framingham, MA: A. E. Foss Publishing Co., 1901.

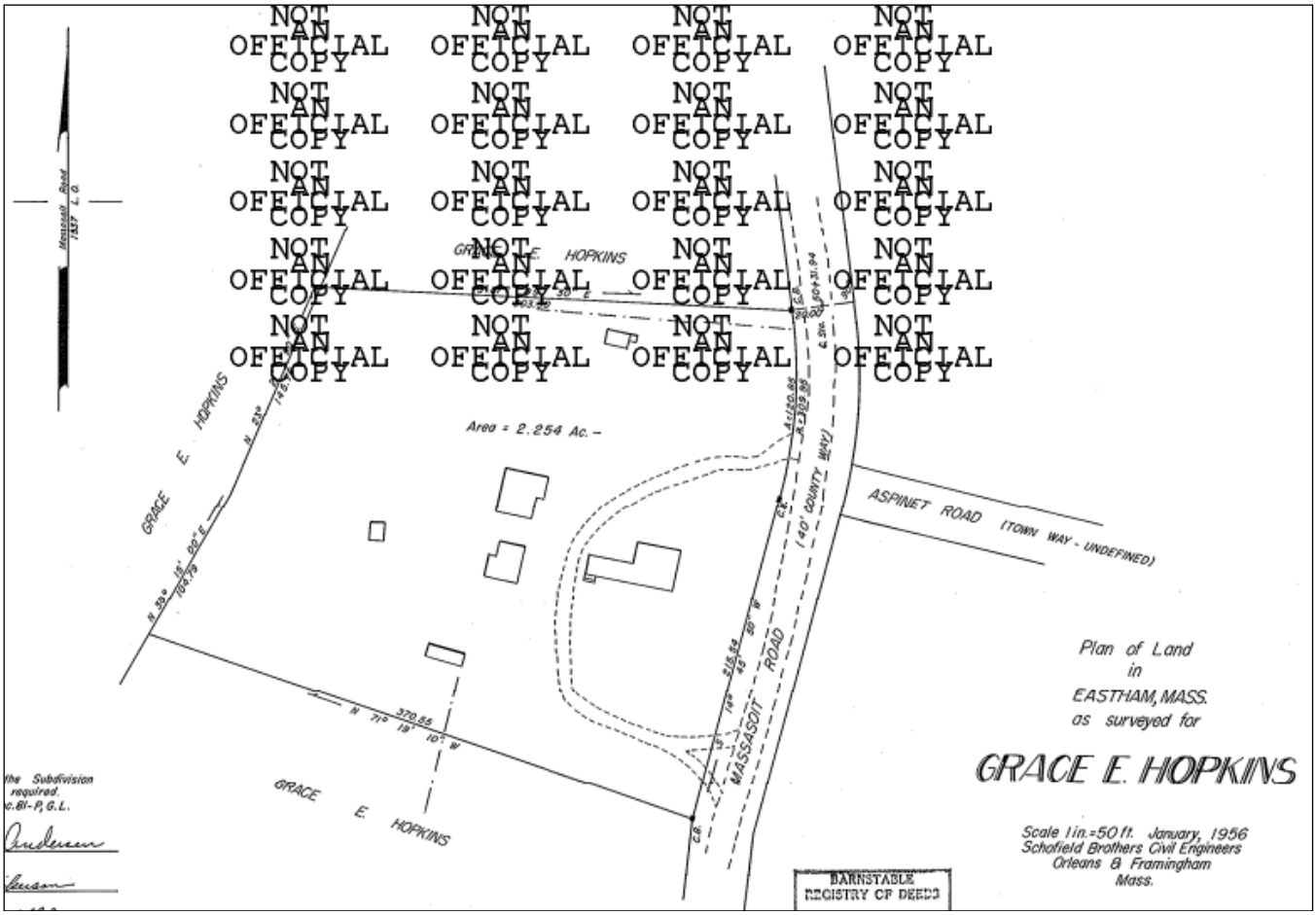
MAPS
Rogers, Josiah, Elijah Knowles, and Simeon Kingman. A Map of Eastham. 1795.
Hales, John G. *Plan of Eastham and Orleans*. 1831.
Walling, Henry F. *Map of the Counties of Barnstable, Dukes and Nantucket Massachusetts Based upon the Trigonometrical Survey of the State*. New York: D. R. Smith and Co.,1858.
Official Topographical Atlas of Massachusetts Compiled and Corrected by H. F. Walling and O. W. Gray. Boston: Stedman, Brown and Lyon, 1871.
Atlas of Barnstable County, Massachusetts. Boston: George H. Walker and Co., 1880.
Atlas of Massachusetts from Topographical Surveys Made in Co-operation by the United States Geological Survey and the Commissioners of the Commonwealth 1884-1888. Boston: Commissioners of the Commonwealth, 1890.
Atlas of Barnstable County, Massachusetts . . . from Official Plans and Actual Surveys. Boston: Walker Lithograph and Publishing Co., 1905, 1910.

[9] James L. Fulton Jr. and Carolyn W. Fulton to Katherine K. Mace, Redding Ridge CT, 8 September 1964, BCD 1270:296; Katherine K. Deegan (fka Katherine K. Mace) to Donald W. Delaney, 9 December 1985, BCD 4834:56; Donald W. Delaney to John E. Bebout II and Madeleine A. Becout, Gay Head NJ, 13 June 1986, BCD 5177:2; Madeleine Vick Anderson and John E. Bebout II to Madeleine Vick Anderson, 1285 Massasoit Road, 7 September 2005, BCD 20274:122. The 1285 Massasoit Road house is depicted on a 2.25-acre lot surrounded by Grace Hopkins's other land on "Plan of Land in Eastham, Mass., as Surveyed for Grace E. Hopkins," January 1956, BCP 127:121; on Lot 8 of a ten-lot subdivision on "Subdivision Plan of Land in Eastham, Mass. Belonging to Grace E. Hopkins," June 1959, BCD 150:91; on .93-acre Lot 8-A on "Plan of Division of Land in Eastham (North) Mass. as Prepared for Katherine K. Mace," September 1969, BCP 232:119; and on Lot 1 on "Plan of Division of Land in Eastham, Mass. as Surveyed and Prepared for Preservation Advocacy Trust," 12 December 1985, BCP 408:68.

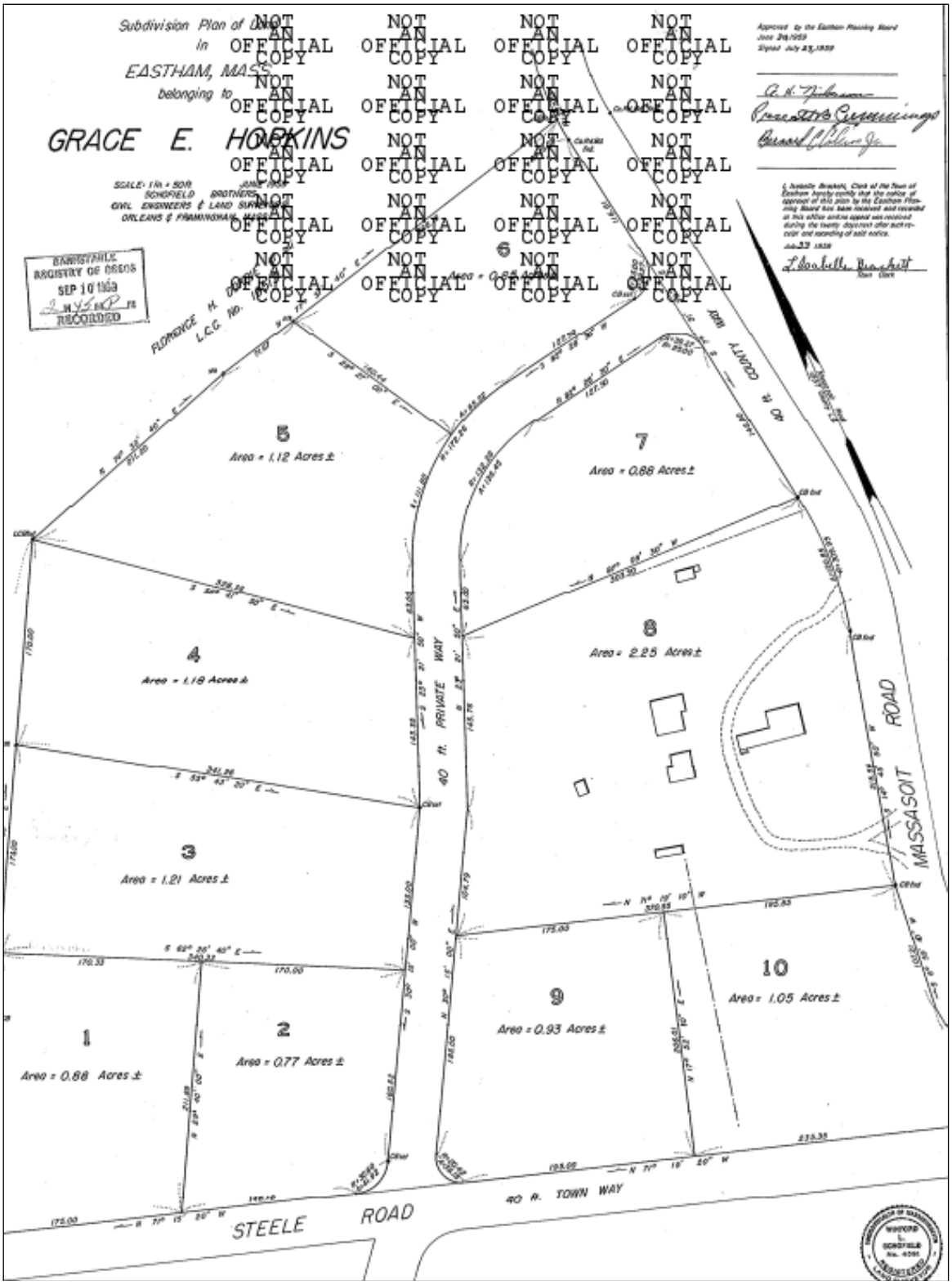
Continuation sheet 3

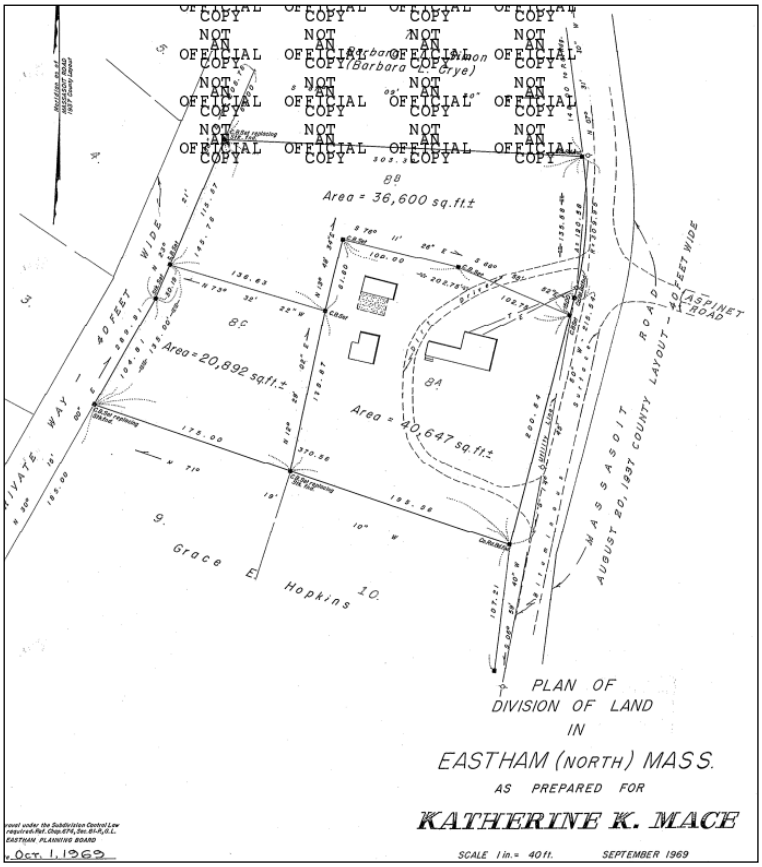
SUPPLEMENTAL IMAGES

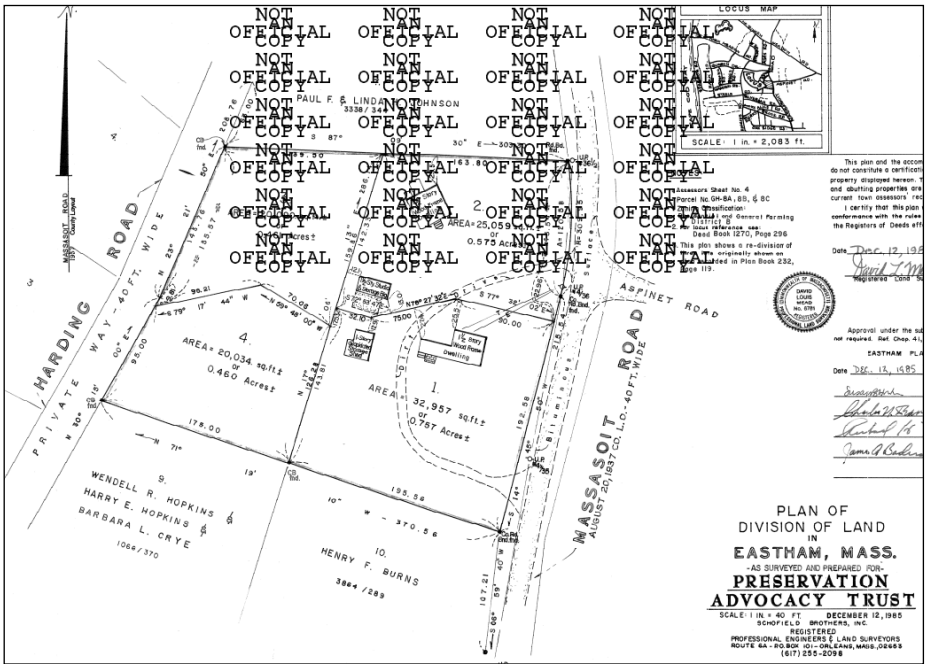
Four plans (BCP 127:121, 150:91, 232:119, 408:68) showing the evolution of the Hopkins estate between 1956 and 1985.



NOT AN OFFICIAL COPY


Subdivision Plan of Land
in
EASTHAM, MASS.
belonging to
GRACE E. HOPKINS
NOT AN OFFICIAL COPY
BARNSTABLE REGISTRY OF DEEDS
SEP 10 1959
RECORDED
5
Area = 1.12 Acres ±
7
Area = 0.88 Acres ±
4
Area = 1.18 Acres ±
8
Area = 2.25 Acres ±
3
Area = 1.21 Acres ±
10
Area = 1.05 Acres ±
9
Area = 0.93 Acres ±
1
Area = 0.88 Acres ±
2
Area = 0.77 Acres ±
40 ft. PRIVATE WAY
MASSASOIT ROAD
STEELE ROAD
40 ft. TOWN WAY


Area = 36,600 sq.ft.±
Area = 20,892 sq.ft.±
Area = 40,647 sq.ft.±
40 FEET WIDE
PRIVATE WAY
MASSASOIT ROAD
AUGUST 20, 1837 COUNTY LAYOUT
ASPINET ROAD
Grace E. Hopkins
PLAN OF
DIVISION OF LAND
IN
EASTHAM (NORTH) MASS.
AS PREPARED FOR
KATHERINE K. MACE
SCALE 1 in. = 40 ft.
SEPTEMBER 1969
Oct. 1, 1969


LOCUS MAP
SCALE: 1 in. = 2,083 ft.
HARDING ROAD
PRIVATE WAY - 40 FT. WIDE
MASSASOIT ROAD
AUGUST 20, 1837 CO. L.O. - 40 FT. WIDE
ASPINET ROAD
AREA = 20,034 sq.ft.± or 0.460 Acres±
AREA = 32,957 sq.ft.± or 0.757 Acres±
WENDELL R. HOPKINS
HARRY E. HOPKINS
BARBARA L. CRYE
HENRY F. BURNS
PLAN OF
DIVISION OF LAND
IN
EASTHAM, MASS.
AS SURVEYED AND PREPARED FOR
PRESERVATION
ADVOCACY TRUST
SCALE: 1 IN. = 40 FT. DECEMBER 12, 1985
SCHOFIELD BROTHERS, INC.
REGISTERED
PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS & LAND SURVEYORS
ROUTE 6A - ROBBIN HILL - ORLEANS, MASS. 02653
(617) 255-2098

PHOTOGRAPHS

(credit Larson Fisher Associates, 2019 unless otherwise noted)

View from south.

View of small barn from south. Collapsed barn in background is on adjoining property.